

A LIQUID MODERN ANALYSIS OF SKIN BLEACHING IN JAMAICA

The focus of this essay is centred upon the contemporary public debate around skin bleaching in Jamaica which has become a major source of public concern as authorities try to ascertain reasons behind the practice (Daily Gleaner 1999). Vickermann (1999) views skin bleaching through a self-hate hypothesis where black people who bleach are seen as conforming to a white aesthetic identity while at the same time rejecting their black cultural heritage. At the root of the self-hate theory lies Jamaica's colonial past and its links with slavery which Vickermann argues left psychological scars that placed European culture and identity at the top of a racial hierarchy. The aim of this piece of work is to look deeper into the skin bleaching debate using the theoretical narrative of liquid modernity (Bauman 2000).

In 1962 when Jamaica gained independence from its metro-pole Britain the new ruling government proudly developed the slogan "out of many, one people" giving an expression to the outside world of a peaceful multiracial society where many ethnic groups co-existed in harmony (Kelly 1963). Brown-Claude (2007) argues this caused Jamaica to be viewed as a colour blind democracy where any discussions centred on blackness became seen as divisive and as a result the structural inequalities within Jamaica that had been engrained and nurtured throughout colonial times continued unabated. Alexander (1977) describes how under colonialism colour hierarchies had been used to order the population into a class system. Those who had lighter skin found themselves in a more privileged position to those with black skin because of their relation to the islands white colonial elite usually through illegitimate relationships between white male colonialists and their black female slave workers. Due to their dual heritage light skinned Jamaicans often lived closer to the colonialist's grand houses and participated in less strenuous work than black Jamaicans usually taking up jobs in tertiary administrative positions which allowed them to form a social class in between the bourgeoisie white colonialists and the black proletariat. Such social circumstances enabled many to access educational institutions and paid employment at a time when many black skinned Jamaicans were still facing the injustice of slavery. Such a social position allowed lighter skinned Jamaicans to place themselves within the colonial system putting them in position to take over the role of leadership when independence finally came.

Barnes (1997) describes how the Miss Jamaica World and Miss Jamaica Universe Beauty pageants epitomised the colour hierarchies within Jamaican society during the 1970s and 80s pointing out the over-representation of lighter skinned Jamaican women (who made up less than 10% of the islands population) and an under representation of black skinned Jamaican (women who represented 90% of the population) taking part in the events. The title of Miss Jamaica exuded huge significance for the island on the international stage as the queen was seen as parading the rich cultural heritage of Jamaica to the World. Many black political groups protested against the over-representation of lighter skinned women in the competition with the promotional phrase of "black is beautiful" to encourage more black skinned women to take part. King O'Riain (2007) argues that beauty queens from non-western countries have to conform to a western cultural ideal in the form of hairstyles, outfits, interests and hobbies, as well as lighter skin tones in order to attract interest within western countries. By altering appearances to a western beauty ideal many queens appeal more to both western judges and audiences allowing them to progress further in competitions and thus increase the profile of the country they represent. Barnes (1997) goes on to state that

given Jamaica's reliance on tourism from western countries many private sector tourist firms who funded the pageants also influenced both the selection and judging of the events to ensure that lighter skinned women would win the title of Miss Jamaica. Barnes believes that the reason behind this was to portray an image of Jamaica as a western friendly nation which a white face would portray.

Thomas (2005) explains that during the 1990s Jamaica's multi-racial identity began to become decentralised as the Jamaican People's National Party came to power under the premiership of Percival Patterson. A form of radicalised black citizenship began to take place which gained a huge following among the black working classes. What the black political movements wanted was an end to the economic, social, political and cultural discrimination against the islands black population that was conceived under colonial slavery and had continued on into the era of post-independence. Black political movements blamed globalization and privatisation as the causes of the continued oppression of black skinned Jamaicans. Brown-Claude (2007) makes the observation that during the 1990s in the midst of the black political protests there was also an increase in the amount of people bleaching their skin. Rabotham (2000) argues that even with a black political elite skin bleaching is still rife within working class black communities around Jamaica due to the light skinned (browning) population still enjoying a privileged position within the islands socio-economic elite.

Charles (2003) emphasises how the perceived goal behind skin bleaching is to achieve a browning complexion which refers to a skin colour that is lighter than black skin but slightly darker than a mixed race complexion. Smith (1990) argues that even though Jamaica has become independent of its former colonial rulers the colour hierarchy imposed upon Jamaica by colonialism has not vanished. Abrahams (2000) develops upon Smith's argument and believes that the development of a colour hierarchy within Jamaican society has caused people within the black community to develop a low sense of self-worth which in turn has led to a feeling of self-hate. Abrahams argues that self-hate manifests itself in the way that black Jamaicans inform their children that white skin is better than brown which in turn is seen as being better than black skin causing an ideology of lighter skin providing a higher social status. The self-hate theory which is used to stigmatise skin bleachers is developed through this social psychology of identity. Erikson (1994) explains how the development of identity starts during early adolescence when children are confronted with questions centred around who they are; and their place within the social world. By answering these questions the child reorganises their early life into a pattern that they can relate to, and is divided into the past, the perceived present and the future and therefore seen as a necessary process in adding unity and purpose to an individual's life. Asante (1993) argues that individuals construct identities based on gender, class, religion, politics, race and ethnicity. These specific identities are then used in context specific situations e.g. to align oneself to a political movement or to put across a positive impression at work. Identity can therefore be seen as a fluid construction where individuals can constantly change the way they want both themselves and others to perceive them. A key psychological study used by self-hate theorists to back up their claim of a colour hierarchy within Jamaica is an experiment carried out by Clark and Clark (1947) which involved both black and white children being given a choice of choosing to play with either black or white dolls. The results of the experiment showed that black children preferred white dolls ahead of black dolls causing the researcher's to come to the conclusion that the reason behind the black children's rejection of the black dolls was a feeling of self-hate towards themselves, emphasising Abrahams (2000) assertion that Jamaica's social colour hierarchy was having the effect of creating a self-hate philosophy of white being right and black being bad. Cross (1991) placed concern over the results from the doll study stating that only the responses of black children choosing white dolls were recorded while any record of white children choosing black dolls were wiped from the research. Smith (1990) however continues the perception of a self-hate ideology by referring to studies performed in the 1970s on high school children in Jamaica which showed

that white skinned children opinionated themselves as having more authority than children with light brown skin who in turn saw themselves as having more social status than children with black skin.

The self-hate thesis developed in the aforementioned literature relies upon the paradigm of modernity for its claims surrounding a perceived lack of self-worth within black communities causing this essay to take an in-depth look into the theoretical paradigm of modernity and its link with works centred on black culture in the academy. Modernity is defined as a "... shorthand term for modern society, or industrial civilization. Portrayed in more detail, it is associated with (1) a certain set of attitudes towards the world, the idea of the world as open to transformation, by human intervention; (2) a complex of economic institutions, especially industrial production and a market economy; (3) a certain range of political institutions, including the nation-state and mass democracy. Largely as a result of these characteristics, modernity is vastly more dynamic than any previous type of social order. It is a society—more technically, a complex of institutions—which, unlike any preceding culture, lives in the future, rather than the past" (Giddens 1998, 94). Habermas (1987) interprets modernity as providing the central core of legal, political and economic rationality within which discourses in the western world are centred around in order to reach rational conclusions seen in the "*spheres of value and structures of consciousness that make possible a critical transformation of traditional knowledge in relation to specifically given validity claims.*" (Habermas 1987:340).

Other social theorists have a more critical view on modernity and its effects on society. Horkheimer and Adorno (1944) argue that the enlightenment led to the period of modernity characterizing a totalitarian mentality within which western societies developed the need to define and control the world under a paradigm conforming to western ideologies as being essential in governing society, "*for the enlightenment, whatever does not conform to the rule of computation and utility is suspect... Enlightenment is totalitarian.*" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1944:6). The main goal of modernity was its will to identify which is seen in the way that the general takes preference over the particular and that every identity has a flip side which is non-identical and therefore repressed. "*The identity of everything with everything else is paid for in that nothing may at the same time be identical with itself*" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1944: 6). The repression of the non-identical is seen as being linked to the notion of instrumental reason in the way that objects which did not conform to the identity norm of the western world became manipulated to achieve the desired result of an ordered identity without any consideration for the complications of these actions upon a targeted population.

Fanon (1967) builds upon modernity's notion of instrumental reason by analysing the psychological impacts upon black people within countries under colonial rule. Fanon argues that under the influence of a white orientated world black people developed a sense of dependency and inadequacy in the way that they were manipulated into losing their cultural independence and instead conform to the cultural practices of their western colonial rulers. In Fanon's view this caused black colonized people to develop a sense of inferiority towards their white colonizers causing them to adopt the cultural norms and values of western society above that of African culture. Fanon's psychoanalytical theory emphasises the dark side of modernity's will to identify social phenomenon's within the western paradigm of thought. The aforementioned analysis of modernity links with the work of Alexander (1977) who eludes to a colour hierarchy in Jamaican society whereby lighter skinned people who were seen as being more identifiable to the colonial elite were placed higher within the racial hierarchy than those with black skin who were seen as being non-identical. Abrahams (2000) work can be linked alongside that of Fanon's (1967) in the way that the colonial psyche created a feeling of low self-worth resulting in low self-esteem among black populations as they occupied the lowest rung of the colonial hierarchy. Horkheimer and Adorno (1944) believed that modernity's interpretation of identifying every social phenomenon through a

western paradigm of thought only had the effect of plunging humanity into a new kind of barbarism which slavery and colonial hierarchies endorse.

Bauman (1991) interpreted modernity in much the same way as Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) but instead of focussing on the goal of identifying all social phenomenon through a western rationality, he instead placed emphasis on the ordering of all social entities through a western political lens as the sole aim of modernity constituting to "*an age of artificial order and grand societal designs, the era of planners, visionaries and more generally gardeners who treat society as a virgin plot of land to be expertly designed*" (Bauman 1991:113). In an attempt to order society nation states set up social institutions that shaped policy around social problems and ideological aspirations of how the state should ideally look. Bauman (1991) likens this to gardening in the way that modernity wanted to present society as an aesthetically pleasing garden with a luscious mowed lawn and an assortment of eye catching flowers, any weeds or pests who might spoil the pleasant design must be exposed and hidden from view. Charles (2003) builds upon Bauman's analogy by explaining how Jamaica after independence saw itself as a Creole society whereby the population developed affinities to various cultural heritages but continued to foster an allegiance towards British styled political institutions that were used under colonialism. A struggle for power ensued between black political movements which called for a greater expression of African culture and the light skinned elite who choose to remain loyal to western cultural institutions and values.

Vincent (2006) describes how Marcus Garvey and his UNIA (Universal Negro Improvement Agency) rejected the repression of black populations and cultures under colonialism and pressed for a society based around racial equality by emphasising the need for equality in discourses between black and white cultures. Garvey expressed a view that equality could never be achieved under the paradigm of white social philosophies as these ideologies would still promote white interests above those of black peoples and was one of the reasons why Garvey rejected western forms of Marxism and Socialism. Garvey believed that by placing black races on an equal socio-political and cultural playing field as their white counterparts it would enable discourses on equality to serve the interests of both races. In order to achieve this utopia Garvey proposed that black people withdraw from the racist white world and instead focus on improving the black race through cultural, social and economic enrichment with projects such as the "Back to Africa" campaign where people from around the Caribbean and the United States were encouraged to visit Africa on board Garvey's fleet of passenger ships "the Black Star Line". In order to define the race boundaries of who was to be encompassed into the UNIA movement Garvey put forward the one drop rule where anyone who had one drop of African blood was eligible to join.

Cronon (1969) argues that Garvey and his UNIA movement created a base for black political movements all around the black Atlantic in many different forms. The notion of "Back to Africa" began to become central in black politics as black people from the USA, Caribbean and in particular Jamaica (where Garvey is a national hero) began to push forward a notion of black identity through links to African culture. The black political movements mentioned by (Thomas 2005) originate from the UNIA movement instigated by Marcus Garvey but find themselves confined to Jamaica's working class areas where living conditions have become degraded and crime has risen rapidly in recent years. Bauman's (1993) interpretation of modernity as a social form of control through the ordering of populations indicates that people or movements that are perceived as being pests or weeds that threaten the orderly garden constructed by modernity become interpreted as strangers. Strangers find themselves in a position where they face exclusion from society as they fail to assimilate to the social environment that modernity's political institutions have placed upon society. By becoming classed into the role of a stranger within society automatically places an individual at the bottom of society's social order as they represent an ideology or identity that is at polar opposites of society's norms and values. Jamaica after its independence continued to

use a colonial political system based upon British institutions which still endorsed a colour hierarchy upon the country. Therefore black political movements and their supporters began to become strangers within Jamaican society.

By looking at Jamaican society under colonialism and the initial post-independence era under the social paradigm of modernity an argument can be made for the practice of skin-bleaching showing a sign of self-hate towards black identity and culture. However does the same interpretation of skin bleaching hold up in contemporary Jamaican Society? Critchlow (2005) talks about how since the 1990's there has become a dominant black political elite within Jamaican politics in the form of the Jamaican People's National Party which was ushered in by the election of Percival Patterson in 1992 who promised to provide working class black Jamaicans with a voice in the political arena as well as job security and better social provisions. Now there is a black political elite within Jamaican society does the argument of skin bleaching being a form of self-hate in order to conform to a colonially induced colour hierarchy really hold up?

Charles (2003) states that a psychological study centred on skin bleaching in the early 2000s found interesting results. The study which consisted of eighteen people was made up of eleven females and nine males aged between thirteen and thirty nine. The participants were split into two groups; one of which consisted of people with suspect skin discolouration from perceived skin bleaching activity and another consisting of people who showed no signs of skin discolouration. None of the participants were told the real reason behind the experiment so that their answers would remain as honest as possible. Using the Rosenberg Self Esteem scale (RSE) the respondents were asked to answer questions on how beautiful or handsome they thought they were using a list of possible responses linked to seventeen questions based around self-perception and self-confidence. The results of the study found that both the controlled group and the skin bleaching group had scored around the same on the RSE scale while on certain questions the skin bleaching group had achieved slightly higher results than the controlled group. What this experiment showed was that skin bleaching and character traits of self-hate were not related as previous experiments had suggested causing the debate around skin bleaching to shift emphasis on to other social issues rather than solely the hypothesis of self-hate.

The work of Zygmunt Bauman comes to the fore in the form of his liquid modern paradigm of narrating society in the hope of finding new explanations behind the practice of skin bleaching. Bauman (2000) describes liquid modernity as being the transition of modernity from its previously solid form to a liquid state. The transition from solid to liquid has caused new unprecedented issues within society resulting in new challenges for political institutions and individuals alike. Social forms and institutions no longer have time to solidify and provide frames of reference for the new challenges being faced by society causing individuals to face new social stimuli alone without the direction of political institutions that cannot create policies in time to legislate for the new social issues that are developing. Individuals are therefore forced to develop short term plans in order to navigate the liquid modern world with the free market acting as the sole distribution point through which individuals can pick their desired consumer goods and services in an attempt to navigate their social environment. Liquid modernity places fear as "*arguably the most sinister of demons nesting in the open societies of our time. But it is the insecurity of the present and uncertainty about the future that hatch and breed the most awesome and least bearable of our fears. That insecurity and that uncertainty, in their turn, are born of a sense of impotence: we seem to be no longer in control, whether singly, severally or collectively – and to make things still worse we lack the tools that would allow politics to be lifted to the level where power has already settled, so enabling us to recover and repossess control over the forces shaping our shared condition while setting the range of our possibilities and the limits to our freedom to choose*" (Bauman 2007: 26).

Bauman (2007) explains the cause of the liquid modern epoch as stemming from the deregulation of the life world under the new right policies of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher who cut back the role of the state preferring instead to privatise industry and social services. What privatization did was place control of employment and social services into the hands of market forces whose goal is to make profit. Bauman (1998) refers to this procedure as negative globalization where power becomes separate from the political institutions of the nation state and instead aligns itself with multinational corporations which float around outside the jurisdiction of any political state boundary. With the state having less and less influence over social issues, individuals within society find themselves in a position where they must learn to use the free market in order to adapt to the ever changing life world around them (Bauman 2007). Giddens (1991) refers to the navigation of the social world through the free market as life politics which refers to the way that individuals within society consume goods and services to solve the anxieties facing them in life; examples include dieting, beauty products, marriage counselling, and plastic surgery.

"Both life-planning and the adoption of lifestyle options become (in principle) integrated with bodily regimes. It would be quite short-sighted to see this phenomenon only in terms of changing ideals of bodily appearance (such as slimness or youthfulness), or as solely brought about by the commodifying influence of advertising. We become responsible for the design of our own bodies, and in a certain sense noted above are forced to do so the more post-traditional the social contexts in which we move" (Giddens 1991:102). Giddens refers to experts within consumer fields who act as life coaches informing individuals which services and products are the best for them to buy in an attempt to ensure that the individual makes the correct choice in choosing to buy the right product or service to solve the specific anxieties facing them.

Tate (2009) shifts the issue of liquid modern life politics into the field of black beauty aesthetics by focussing on the browning identity. The participants in Tate's study provided interesting insight into the role life politics plays within the construction of an identity. Respondents stated that the browning identity occupied a colour tone in between that of black and mixed raced skin complexions. Some of the mixed race respondents stated that they used sunbed sessions in order to achieve the darker browning identity going against the self-hate thesis of a colour hierarchy where the lighter you are the more social status you achieve (Smith 1990). The concept of life politics is developed within Tate's (2009) work in the way that the women who were interviewed used certain products and services in order to achieve and maintain their browning identity. Participants stressed how important it was to find the correct brand of sun cream in order not to burn too much or the correct brand of baby oil that will allow the skin to brown towards a desired colour. Tanning cream was also mentioned by the respondents as being essential in achieving their desired identity particularly amongst lighter skinned respondents who stressed that certain types of tanning cream had to be used in order to get the desired skin colouration as other products created a cheap and unrealistic effect. Tate's work shows how life politics plays a major role in identity construction placing insight into how individuals within society use products and services to achieve a desired look.

Bauman (1988) elaborates further on Giddens notion of life politics by introducing the concepts of the code and agenda of choice in describing how the free market controls the type of products that individuals in society spend their money on. The agenda of choice is set out by the free market in the way that retailers and other businesses choose the products and services they put on sale to the public. Causing the individual shopper to in fact be making choices on a pre-picked selection of consumer goods and therefore have no real influence on the product or service that they are buying other than having enough money to actually purchase it. The code of choice refers to the public perception of a product by making the right decision about whether the commodity will enable the individual to assume a pseudo-psychological sense of acceptance and rationality within society. The code of

choice is linked to a wider debate around social control which Davis (2008) links to society's progression from solid to liquid modernity. Solid modernity was characterised by the panoptic method of social control. Foucault (1977) describes panopticism as the way that individuals are monitored by the political elite through the constant knowledge that their actions are under observation causing order to be maintained through a fear of being observed acting irrationally by the state.

Davis (2008) argues that a synoptic method of social control polices society in the liquid modern world. Synopticism is described as being the opposite of panopticism in the way that the few now watch the many and is linked to the notion of self-policing through the market which can be seen in the importance the code of choice plays in an individual's attempt to purchase products and services. One of the main tools used to help in the self-policing of individuals within liquid modern society is the celebrity who provides the social ideals and norms which the rest of the population follow. Bauman (2000:30) states "*And so there is no more 'Big Brother watching you'; it is now your task to watch the swelling ranks of Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and watch them closely and avidly, in the hope of finding something useful for yourself: an example to imitate or a word of advice about how to cope with your problems, which, like their problems, need to be coped with individually and can be coped with only individually.*" Tate's (2009) participants' emphasise Bauman's claim by pointing to several celebrities such as Keisha Cole and Rihanna who they believed portrayed the browning identity which they adhered to.

However a major obstacle has to be overcome for the liquid modern narrative to be made applicable to Jamaican society. Afrocentrist scholars such as Asante (2006) warn against placing western philosophical paradigms of thought into debates concerning black cultural issues as often throughout the course of history they have proven to provide inaccurate accounts on the social issues they were supposed to be narrating. Argyrou (2003) stresses this point further by rejecting the notion that western forms of modernity can encompass and narrate the entire world. The only hope then of creating a liquid modern analysis of skin bleaching in Jamaica is to link the concept of the American cultural saturation of the world to the debate.

Hall (1993) argues that the social and cultural environment of late (liquid) modernity has become a paradox within the capitalist paradigm. On the one hand many western countries acknowledge and promote the view of integrated world communities coming together under a multicultural prism of thought, as well as rejecting radical far right politics. Hall argues however that the capitalist position is increasingly hypocritical as many countries from the developing south are being coerced into following the free market consumer culture of the western world and in particular that of America. Holton (2008) describes the spread of American consumer culture as coca-colonization which is the result of America the world's only superpower attempting to spread its economic, cultural and political philosophies around the world. America achieves its global dominance by encouraging countries from the developing south to adopt westernised consumer cultures so that developing countries become open to American products which can sell through a free market economy. Countries are exposed to American cultural values through mediums such as T.V programmes, sports, and celebrities which all encourage a nation's population to adapt to an American way of life. Zizek (2002) puts forward the idea of analysing the systemic real when analysing the spread of American culture throughout the world. The systemic real refers to the social, economic and political systems that America uses to spread its ideology and philosophy around the world. The system used by America is neo-liberalism which focusses upon the privatization of industry and services encouraging the formation of a free market where private sector businesses compete for each individual's custom. Zizek links American capitalist neo-liberalism to Islamic fundamentalist terror organizations in the way that both ideologies seek to conquer other cultural philosophies and create a world where only their ideology is prominent. Any country that rejects the notion of America's neo liberal philosophy

is seen as rogue or untrustworthy e.g. Iran, North Korea, Afghanistan as well as any other political philosophy that offers an alternative social structure.

The role of westernised free markets and life politics plays a huge role in the skin bleaching debate in Jamaica. Brown-Claude (2007) states how the Jamaican government's response to skin bleaching was to launch a campaign entitled "Don't Kill the Skin" which was launched to coincide with black history month and had a dual aim of encouraging the population not to harm their skin through bleaching as well as promoting the cultural significance of keeping one's skin black. The public's response to the government's campaign was weak as the vast majority of those interviewed within Jamaica's working class communities believed that the campaign would change nothing as campaigns like this have been run before with little effect. Bauman's (2000) analysis on the divorce between politics and power is evident here when assessing the attitudes of the Jamaican people who believe that any campaign seen as trying to police skin bleaching will fail as they have done before. The evidence put forward also shows that political institutions are becoming inept at creating policies that can help their populations negotiate serious social issues causing people to migrate towards the free market to solve the social anxieties they face.

Brown-Claude (2007) places the blame for the increase in skin bleaching firmly at the door of economics within Jamaica stating that over the past few decades Jamaica's economy has suffered heavily due to high levels of debt. Jamaica's high level of debt has caused a huge surge in unemployment among the islands working class population with the amount of people out of work hitting 11% and continuing to rise. The public sector jobs which the predominantly black working class performed have now disappeared as the government has been forced to reduce public spending which has had an adverse effect on social welfare programmes within working class Jamaican communities causing the overall standard of living to drop. The public school system which was once the main route of social mobility for working class Jamaicans has now been blocked as the government cannot afford to invest in the islands education infrastructure causing there to be large class sizes and limited resources in equipment and teachers making it harder for school children to show their potential and win scholarships to university. Again Bauman's (2007) liquid modern paradigm is again in evidence here as Jamaica cuts public spending and re-organises its economy towards private investment within a free market arena causing an increase in social anxiety. Brown-Claude (2007) alludes to the anxiety faced by many black skinned Jamaicans by commenting on how middle class browning communities have fared better with the country's economic restructuring as many middle class Jamaicans work in the private sector for multinational companies in the form of banks and financial services which have not felt the effects of austerity like the public sector.

Brown-Claude adds fire to the liquid modern argument by stating that contemporary Jamaican society is suffering from high unemployment levels due to cuts in public sector employment which the majority of black skinned working class Jamaicans rely upon for their income. While the public sector has been shedding jobs in order to cut national debt the private sector which employs the majority of lighter skinned Jamaicans has not suffered as badly from the restructuring of the islands economy. Is it therefore not logical to assume that the cause of skin bleaching is the decision many black Jamaicans are making to use the free market to relieve their social anxieties about not having a job. What this essay has attempted to do is show how in a liquid modern world under the influence of privatization individuals face the anxiety of social issues such as unemployment, security and prosperity alone with only the market as a site to solve these issues. Skin bleaching when analysed in this manner relates to a question of survival in an increasingly individualised world where one must copy the trends of those who are successful in society in order to use the market to its full potential. In contemporary Jamaica those who are successful in acquiring jobs are those with lighter skin therefore they set the code of choice for those in society to copy. However if public sector jobs started to appear again in Jamaica's economy and private sector business

started moving to places with cheaper labour costs, would it not be logical to assume that many lighter skinned Jamaicans or those which had previously bleached might start darkening their skins to relieve the social anxieties they feel about not being employed. Instead of focusing upon issues of self-hate this essay has placed skin bleaching firmly at the door of economics and political philosophies which further emphasise Garvey's philosophy of western political ideologies providing no freedom for black people as seen in the way that neo liberalism and its privatising ideology is the catalyst for the social anxiety and fear faced by individuals within Jamaican society.

The liquid modern analysis on skin bleaching put forward in this essay examines the social, political, economic and cultural issues within contemporary Jamaican society to provide an explanation that goes far deeper than the hypothesis based around self-hate. By introducing concepts such as free markets, life politics and coca-colonization one can understand the choices made by many working class Jamaicans to bleach their skin in order to find work as political institutions cannot provide them with security against the anxieties they feel about being unemployed. The free market therefore provides the only site where individuals can cure their social anxieties by purchasing bleaching cream in order to find work in the private sector where jobs have traditionally been in the possession of lighter skinned Jamaicans. By analysing the deeper undercurrents surrounding skin bleaching it becomes clear that using Zizek's analysis of the systemic real it is the fundamentalist capitalism endorsed by America through neo-liberalism that feeds the skin bleaching epidemic. Through forcing developing countries to adopt an American model of economics through the privatization of industry and services. By doing this America ensures that populations around the world purchase the consumer products that western companies sell. By placing skin bleaching products into Jamaica's free market economy the market is encouraging working class Jamaicans to bleach their skin or bleaching products would not be on the markets agenda of choice for shoppers to buy. In analysing the logic of this particular argument one can see the dangers of opening up a countries economy to the neo-liberal ideologies of the whose sole aim is to make money and therefore differs very little from the occidental reason of identity that modernity used in rationalizing slavery.

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